

Pol 15-1 TUN
Department of State

TELEGRAM

0 011800Z JAN 71 ZFFA

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4465
BT

SECRET TUNIS 0001

NODIS

Reviewed by: Ambassador W. Wilman, II

Date: 4-27-76

00190

JAN 1, 5:23 PM 1971

SUBJECT: ILLNESS OF PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA

REF: STATE 210077 AND PREVIOUS

1. DOCTORS BARNES AND MAGAL HAVE EXAMINED PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA ON THREE OCCASIONS DURING PAST TWO DAYS AND HAVE HELD LENGTHY CONSULTATIONS WITH TEAM OF TUNISIAN DOCTORS, AS WELL AS WITH MRS. BOURGUIBA WHO IS IN ALMOST CONSTANT ATTENDANCE WITH THE PRESIDENT. DOCTORS WILL SEE PRESIDENT AGAIN SATURDAY, JAN. 2, AT 5:00 PM WHICH TIME SWISS DOCTOR AND FRENCH PSYCHIATRIST WHO TREATED BOURGUIBA IN PARIS WILL ALSO BE PRESENT.

2. BARNES AND MAGAL'S PRELIMINARY DIAGNOSIS IS THAT THE PRESIDENT WAS SUFFERING FROM "INVOLUTIONAL MELANCHOLIA" AND THAT POSSIBLY SUPERIMPOSED ON THIS CONDITION NOW IS ORGANIC BRAIN DISEASE, PROBABLY ARTERIOSCLEROSIS. THE DOCTORS REPORT THAT IN THE PAST THE INVOLUTIONAL MELANCHOLIA HAS BEEN TREATED IN PARIS WITH SHOCK THERAPY (TWO SERIES). THE DOCTORS FEEL, HOWEVER, THAT BOURGUIBA HAS NOT HAD ADEQUATE DIAGNOSTIC STUDIES, E.G. HE HAS NOT HAD SKULL X-RAYS, BRAIN SCAN, PNEUMOENCEPHALOGRAPH, GLUCOSE TOLERANCE TEST, SPECIAL LECTROENCEPHALOGRAMS, OR SPINAL TAP, AND THAT THEIR LIKELY RECOMMENDATION, WHICH WILL BE GIVEN AFTER THE SATURDAY EXAMINATION, WILL BE THAT PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA GO TO SOME UNSPECIFIED MEDICAL CENTER (SUCH AS ZURICH, LONDON) WHERE SUCH STUDIES CAN BE MADE. CERTAIN TESTS CANNOT BE DONE IN TUNISIA. WHILE THEY INDICATE THAT BOURGUIBA MAY WELL BE MOVING DOWNHILL RAPIDLY TOWARD PROGRESSIVE ENFEEBLEMENT, THEY CANNOT RULE OUT THE CHANCE THAT HE HAS A TREATABLE CONDITION, WHICH CAN ONLY BE DETERMINED WITH FURTHER TESTS.

3. THE DOCTORS REPORT THAT PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA SPENDS ALMOST ALL HIS TIME IN BED, UNDER HEAVY SEDATION. DESPITE THIS MEDICINE, HE HAS CONSTANT INSOMNIA. BOURGUIBA HAS SERIOUS SPEECH IMPEDIMENT WHICH MAY BE PARTLY DUE TO HEAVY SEDATION OR ORGANIC BRAIN DISEASE. HE STARTS

ACTION COPY

NODIS REVIEW

Cat. A - Control removed:
transferred to OFAD/C
Cat. B - Transferred to OFAD/C
with additional access
controlled by S/S
Cation and custody
by S/S

Reviewed by: 9 Oct 1987

Withdrawal No.

STATE DEPARTMENT SYSTEMATIC REVIEW
X Reclaim class n ☐ Change/classify to
EO 12858, 25X
FRO/MDR by 12 Date: 11/11/76
4/21/2006

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

[REDACTED]

NO
OD
IS
NO
OD
IS
NO
OD
IS

NOODLES
NOODLES
NOODLES

NOODLES
NOODLES
NOODLES

~~SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED
PA/HO Department of State
E.O. 12958, as amended
September 6, 2007

[REDACTED]

-3- TUNIS 0001, Jan 1, 1971

SIDE, MAINLY FROM THE TUNISIAN MEDICAL TEAM, TO LETTING THE PRESIDENT GO ABROAD, AND THE TUNISIAN DOCTORS SEEM TO BE THE ONES PUSHING FOR AN AMERICAN MEDICAL TEAM TO COME IN AND HELP TAKE CARE OF THE PRESIDENT. BARNES AND MAGAL SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT INDICATED TO THEM THAT HE WOULD BE WILLING TO GO ABROAD IF THAT WERE THE RECOMMENDATION.

6. COMMENT.

A. THE PRIME MINISTER IS OBVIOUSLY FEELING THE PRESSURE TO REPORT TO HIS CABINET AND THEN TO ISSUE A COMMUNIQUE ON THE PRESIDENT'S CONDITION AND PLANS. IN SUCH A COMMUNIQUE, REFERENCE MAY WELL BE MADE TO THE CONSULTATIVE SERVICES OF THE AMERICAN DOCTORS, AS WELL AS TO THE SWISS AND FRENCH DOCTORS. IF THIS OCCURS, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD NOT ONLY BE NECESSARY BUT ADVISABLE FOR THE TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT TO ISSUE SUCH A PUBLIC STATEMENT MENTIONING AMERICAN PARTICIPATION.

B. DOCTORS BARNES AND MAGAL BELIEVE THAT THEY MUST GIVE THE TUNISIAN DOCTORS A CAUTIOUSLY WORDED WRITTEN REPORT. THOUGH IT WILL NOT BE SUBMITTED UNTIL AFTER THE SATURDAY CONSULTATIONS WITH THE SWISS AND FRENCH DOCTORS, THEY DO NOT ANTICIPATE ANY CHANGE IN THEIR RECOMMENDATION. (THEIR REPORT WOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE TUNISIAN DOCTORS IN THEIR CAPACITY AS CONSULTANTS.) THE DOCTORS WILL REFRAIN FROM RECOMMENDING ANY SPECIFIC PLACE OUTSIDE OF TUNISIA FOR THESE FURTHER DIAGNOSTIC TESTS. HOWEVER, BARNES AND MAGAL ANTICIPATE THAT THE TUNISIANS MAY SUGGEST THAT BOURGUIBA GO TO THE UNITED STATES FOR THIS PURPOSE.

C. THE PRIME MINISTER WILL UNDOUBTEDLY REQUEST FURTHER ASSISTANCE FROM THE UNITED STATES, EVEN THOUGH HE FULLY UNDERSTANDS THAT THE SERVICES OF THE AMERICAN DOCTORS HAVE BEEN GIVEN WITHOUT FURTHER COMMITMENT.

D. WE WILL COMMENT FURTHER AFTER TOMORROW NIGHT'S MEETING. THE DOCTORS ARE TENTATIVELY PLANNING TO LEAVE TUNIS ON SUNDAY BUT WILL REMAIN LONGER IF NECESSARY. IN THE MEANTIME WASHINGTON COMMENT WOULD BE APPRECIATED.

GP-1.

RELPH

BT

[REDACTED]

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY